attention of the Guernsey gas consumers—or would-be gas consumers rather—to our own disinterested efforts in the cause of the gas movement, "that if he do not reduce the price to something nearer the standard price in England, some other company will. We are personally acquainted," adds the *Sun*, significantly, "with a gentleman who has exchanged several letters on this subject with one of the most wealthy companies in London, and it will only require the support of the gas-consumers here to establish a branch company in Guernsey, that will engage to supply the article at 7*s.*"

On our own part, we too have occasion to know, from appeals to our future efforts in their cause, that the Guernsey people only await such a reduction, with which, it would appear, they would be, at least for the present, perfectly contented; but that otherwise they are determined to "agitate for the gas movement," in which we shall certainly support them to the utmost.

CHLORINE AS A DEODORIZER OR DETOXICANT.

Though jealously setting our faces against the substitution of even the most consummate deodorizer in place of a system of regular and periodical cleansing, whether of cesspools or drains, we deem it a matter of scarcely less moment, now that there may be said to be the commencement made of what we hope will prove to be a general and thorough scouring of our towns and cities, to insist, impressively, upon the safety, nay, the extreme desirableness, of mollifying and sweetening that general 'commotion' which *Punch* so graphically describes, by aid of the best and cheapest or most plentiful deodorizers; otherwise, the stirring up of so much rank corruption all at once and at this critical moment, may prove to be an evil worse than even that deadly one, the virulence of which it is the main and more immediate object of all to obviate. And in one form or other, let us here observe, that wonderful agent, chlorine, has been proved to be as pre-eminent a deodorizer, as it has long been known to be a bleacher. Somehow or other, its very office seems to be to root out corruption and all uncleanness. It is to this agent alone that the power of common salt to preserve animal matter FROM corruption must be attributed. It is to this agent under the form of chloride of lime that bleachers are so much indebted. It is to this agent under the form of chloride of lime itself, or chloride of zinc, or of some other more or less suitable metallic or other base, that medical men and others mainly trust for the prevention of infection in fevers, &c., and it is not a little remarkable that the next best agency perhaps in the latter case, viz., camphor, is a substance extremely analogous to one of those peculiarly vegetable substances which chlorine itself has been found to be capable of forming. In short, if an *enlightened* heathen devotee, if such there could be, were anxious to select a suitable incense to Æsculapius, he would unquestionably cause this sunny spirit, morning, noon, and evening, to ascend, in its pale but warm tinted cloud or vapour, as a *sweet-smelling* savour to the god of health. And in truth even sweet-smelling we uphold it to be, although its pungency has led it to be classed with stinking odours, and its analogue bromine, with an odour very much the same, to be even stigmatized with the *name* of stench (bromine) to which both it and chlorine are antagonists, so inveterate and *extreme* as thus to *meet* them, as it were, upon their own vile ground.

A new form under which chlorine has recently appeared as a deodorizer seems to merit notice. We will here present the *Manchester Guardian's* account of it:—

"A discovery, which promises to be of great value, has just been announced by Mr. Young, a chemist in Manchester, who has generously imparted it to the public. Many substances have been used for the purpose of removing the offensive odour of night-soil and other decomposing matter, but to all those commonly in use some objection may be urged. Some, such as chlorine and sulphurous acid, along with the unpleasant smell, destroy the fertilizing properties; others, such as nitrate of lead and chloride of zinc, are expensive; but the one now proposed is free from either objection. The new deodorizer is an abundant waste product from the manufacture of chlorine; it consists principally of a solution of chloride of manganese, with a variable quantity of chloride of iron, and generally a little hydrochloric acid and free chlorine. Cesspools, and other places, giving out the most offensive odours, have been immediately sweetened by it."

From this account it will be perceived that chlorine is still the deodorizer even in the new and cheaper form suggested, and even though the latter be contrasted with the former. That a substance such as chlorine in any form will "destroy the fertilizing properties" of night-soil, we very much doubt. Indeed, when it is considered that one *remarkable* property of chlorine consists in its capability of absorbing the actinic ray of the solar light which so powerfully promotes vegetation, and that salt is now admitted to possess fertilizing powers to a singular extent, the probability is that in any form of combination (for except in some such form, a gas like it can scarcely ever be applied to such a purpose) it will in itself turn out to be a most important fertilizing agent. And the probability of this will perhaps appear more clearly still when we keep in view the peculiar tendency of chlorine, in its usual form of acid agency, the muriatic, to dissolve—peculiarly and emphatically to dissolve—such stony, earthy, or oxygenous substances as lime, red ochre, clay, &c., and in its elementary form to subtilize and even to volatilize such fixed and persistent bases as that of iron, or even of flint or silex, namely, silicon. Indeed, to form solvent and even deliquescent substances out of the most insoluble, and subtle and even volatile substances out of the grossest and most fixed, are striking and general peculiarities of chlorine and the other halogens. And the knowledge of its wonderful properties is even yet but in its infancy. Witness the extraordinary joint influence of it on the animal life itself, so recently discovered, viz., in the form of chloroform or terchloride of formyle, as used by Dr. Simpson, Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, and who has successfully employed it in the obviation of the most grievous ills to which human flesh, and especially its more delicate moiety, has hitherto been heir. Its use in the cure of cholera itself and other diseases need not be despaired of. But we admit that we are probably deviating a little out of the straight path of our own more limited and proper province. We were only anxious to insure the favourable attention of our readers and the public in general towards chlorine as a sanitary agent, and if we have succeeded in doing that, our purpose is accomplished.

USE OF PLASTER OF PARIS IN ENGLAND.

The stone which is used in England, and brought from the north, is sulphate of lime, and has scarcely any acid qualities in it: it is, in fact, an imperfect alabaster; and the bad quality of this stone, and the high price, prevent its being used in building matters so much as it otherwise might be, and cause little interest to be taken in the improvement of its manufacture.

In France, on the contrary—where the stone is in great quantity and of the best quality—the consumption in Paris is more than 1,000 tons per diem, and yet other materials abound and can be had as cheap.

The analysed parts of this stone are, after Mr. Darcet—

Sulphate of lime	78·5
Carbonate	15·7
Water of chrystalization	5·8
	100·

A short time ago Mr. J. Delasseux, of Rouen, by his perseverance gained a great step towards its improvement, inasmuch, as by his process he does not alter the nature of the stone nor the chemical qualities: he manufactures at the cheapest rate a material that, though it has the appearance of English plaster, has moreover the qualities of strength and durability, which I shall beg to call your attention to presently.

If I were to erect a kiln at Greenwich, I could sell, *with a large profit*, plaster of the best quality at 30*s.* to 35*s.* per ton; and I think that a material of good quality, sold at this price—which permits to build quickly, solidly, and at a cheap rate, and also combines healthiness, elegance, and comfort — cannot fail to meet the most sanguine expectations of the public: in fact, this plaster, which sets in a few hours, may be employed for constructing and cementing a wall of bricks, partitions for apartments *solid*, iron floors, ceilings, rendering on walls, forming chimney-flues in *blocks*, bedding stones, and exterior and interior decorations. These statements are not theoretical, as for a long time the plaster has been generally employed in France, and the enormous quantity that the trade exports proves that the material is much appreciated.

Professor Hosking, in his new publication, "Guide for the Regulation of Buildings," &c., has sufficiently dwelt upon the value of the material to prove, that in England its introduction should be considered as a useful thing, and would be of great utility in construction.

In practice, the following are the quantities of plaster (as used in Paris) requisite for different works, and, calculating that the plaster sold at 30*s.* per ton, it will be easily seen that my statement is correct, when I say that nothing can oppose its general use.

One ton and a third of plaster to a rod of brickwork, in powder, will cost 2*l.*

	Of plaster per yard super.
Rendering on walls, requires	36lb.
On ceilings	42lb.
On quarter partitions	40lb.
Filling up (or pugging) between joists	60lb.
Outside decorations (elaborate mouldings, &c.)	70lb.

The window openings not to be deducted.

Besides this, I must observe, that mixing plaster with sand, in equal parts, makes a good mortar, which sets quickly, and is not dearer than common mortar.

In a country like England, and especially in London, where the ground does not belong to the party building, I have considered it important to introduce a material which embraces economy as well as incombustibility (so important in a city as London), and, moreover, excludes exterior humidity, and preserves interior warmth, and its hardness precludes the possibility of vermin penetrating—a great advantage over the plaster in which hair is mixed. Another advantage is, that, from the rapidity with which the plaster sets, the house may be inhabited immediately, thereby at once receiving interest for the outlay, instead of waiting three or four months, or longer, as is necessary with common mortar.

I have had some objections made as to the difference of climate, but without any cause. At Rouen, the dampest town of France, and where it rains seven months in the year, all the buildings are in plaster, and I am sure that, in using hard stone for making dry plaster in England, it will resist the variations of the atmosphere as well as Roman cement.—I am, Sir, &c.,

Victor Delassaux, Architect.

January, 1848, No. 1, Norfolk-street, Strand.

Workmen at the Houses of Parliament.—There are at present 1,399 men engaged upon the works of the New Palace, of which number 776 are employed at the building, 120 at the quarries, 335 at the Government works at Thames-bank, upon the joiner's works and wood carvings, and 168 upon miscellaneous works, both at the building and elsewhere. The aggregate amount now expended on the new Houses of Parliament, inclusive of lands, houses, rents, &c., and razing as well as building, temporary erections as well as permanent, is 1,066,561*l.*: the original estimate in 1837 was 707,104*l.*

Green Slates.—Sir: You mentioned in The Builder of February 5 (Notices to Correspondents), that the green slates came from Westmoreland. Many of those now used come from the Bryn Hafod-y-wern Quarry, which is worked by the Royal Bangor Slate Company, and is situate midway between the Pennant Quarries and the little village of Abor, near to Bangor. That procured in Westmoreland is more of the nature of shale, very heavy, and is more like thick laminated grey stone. Nevertheless, for want of better, many of the government buildings were formerly covered with this Westmoreland shale, or slate, as the expense of the necessary timber to support the weight was not a consideration.

Bankside. M. Stuteley.

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